

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 1-27 and add claims 31-59, as indicated below. A complete listing of claims pending in the application following entry of this Amendment are presented as follows:

1-27. (Cancelled)

28. (Previously Presented) A sole component for an article of footwear, the sole component comprising:

a bladder formed of a barrier material that encloses a pressurized fluid, the bladder having a first surface, an ~~opposite~~ second surface, and a sidewall extending between the first surface and the second surface; and

a reinforcing structure bonded to the bladder, the reinforcing structure including:

a first portion positioned at an interface of the first surface and the sidewall,

a second portion spaced from the first portion and positioned at an interface of the second surface and the sidewall, and

a plurality of connecting portions extending adjacent to the sidewall and between the first portion and the second portion, the connecting portions being recessed into sidewall,

wherein the sidewall has a first area that is covered by the connecting portions and a second area that is exposed to an exterior of the sole component, ~~the first area being less than the second area.~~

29. (Previously Presented) A sole component for an article of footwear, the sole component comprising:

a bladder formed of a barrier material that encloses a fluid; and

a reinforcing structure at least partially recessed into the barrier material and bonded to the barrier material,

wherein an exposed surface of the bladder is exposed to an exterior of the sole component, and an exposed surface of the reinforcing ~~structure~~ is exposed to the exterior of the sole component, the exposed surface of the bladder being substantially co-planar with the exposed surface of the reinforcing structure at an interface between the exposed surface of the bladder and the exposed surface of the reinforcing structure.

30. (Previously Presented) The sole component recited in claim 29, wherein at least a portion of the exposed surface of the bladder that is spaced from the interface bulges outward to form a convex area of the exposed surface of the bladder.

31. (New) The sole component recited in claim 28, wherein the first portion extends along a lateral side of the bladder, around a heel region of the bladder, and along a medial side of the bladder.

32. (New) The sole component recited in claim 31, wherein at least one bridge member extends across the bladder and connects opposite sides of the first portion.

33. (New) The sole component recited in claim 28, wherein at least one of the connecting portions is inclined.

34. (New) The sole component recited in claim 28, wherein spaces are formed between the connecting portions.

35. (New) The sole component recited in claim 34, wherein one of the spaces is positioned in a rear-lateral region of the sole structure.

36. (New) The sole component recited in claim 28, wherein a material forming the reinforcing structure has a greater modulus of elasticity than the barrier material.

37. (New) The sole component recited in claim 28, wherein a material forming the reinforcing structure has a greater stiffness than the barrier material.

38. (New) The sole component recited in claim 28, wherein the reinforcing structure includes extensions that extend outward from the bladder.

39. (New) The sole component recited in claim 28, wherein the reinforcing structure includes vent apertures that release air from between the bladder and the reinforcing structure.

40. (New) The sole component recited in claim 28, wherein the reinforcing structure extends between the first surface and the second surface only in a midfoot region and a heel region of the sole component.

41. (New) The sole component recited in claim 28, wherein the barrier material includes a first barrier layer that forms the first surface and the sidewall, and the barrier material includes a second barrier layer that forms the second surface.

42. (New) The sole component recited in claim 41, wherein the reinforcing structure is bonded only to the first barrier layer.

43. (New) The sole component recited in claim 28, wherein edges of the reinforcing structure are beveled.

44. (New) The sole component recited in claim 28, the connecting portions are in tension when the sole component is in an uncompressed state.

45. (New) The sole component recited in claim 29, wherein the reinforcing structure has a first portion, a second portion, and a plurality of connecting portions extending between the first portion and the second portion.

46. (New) The sole component recited in claim 45, wherein the first portion is secured to the bladder at an interface between a first surface and a sidewall, and the second portion is secured to the bladder at an interface between a second surface and the sidewall, the first surface being positioned opposite the second surface.

47. (New) The sole component recited in claim 46, wherein the first portion extends along a lateral side of the bladder, around a heel region of the bladder, and along a medial side of the bladder.

48. (New) The sole component recited in claim 47, wherein at least one bridge member extends laterally across the bladder and connects opposite sides of the first portion.

49. (New) The sole component recited in claim 46, wherein at least one of the connecting portions is inclined.

50. (New) The sole component recited in claim 46, wherein spaces ~~are~~ formed between the connecting portions.

51. (New) The sole component recited in claim 50, wherein one of the spaces is positioned in a rear-lateral region of the sole structure.

52. (New) The sole component recited in claim 29, wherein a material forming the reinforcing structure has a greater modulus of elasticity than the barrier material.

53. (New) The sole component recited in claim 29, wherein a material forming the reinforcing structure has a greater stiffness than the barrier material.

54. (New) The sole component recited in claim 29, wherein the reinforcing structure includes extensions that extend outward from the bladder.

55. (New) The sole component recited in claim 29, wherein the reinforcing structure includes vent apertures that release air from between the bladder and the reinforcing structure.

56. (New) The sole component recited in claim 29, wherein the barrier material includes a first barrier layer that forms a first surface and a sidewall, and the ~~barrier~~ material includes a second barrier layer that forms a second surface, the first surface being opposite the second surface.

57. (New) The sole component recited in claim 56, wherein the reinforcing structure is bonded only to the first barrier layer.

58. (New) The sole component recited in claim 29, wherein edges of the reinforcing structure are beveled.

59. (New) The sole component recited in claim 29, wherein a portion of the reinforcing structure is in tension when the sole component is in an uncompressed state.